

ABSTRACT

An Internet-based secure document signing network is used to authenticate users and help them sign documents employing a signing party certification environment where a certification party, such as a notary, verifies the identity of signing users and lets them sign documents. When a user needs to sign a document, the user obtains the document ID and a password from the creator of the document and then gives it to the certification party to retrieve the document so as to be able to sign the document in the presence of the certification party. The certification party has digital certificates on his computer and an account with the document server that provides access to documents created by the creator. In addition, the Internet-based secure document signing network dispenses digital signatures to end users, who then use the digital certificates for secure access to documents and other information provided by secure servers. The Internet-based secure document signing network employs the services of a digital certificate dispensing unit to dispense certificates.